

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 CIEP-01

TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04

SIL-01 L-03 H-02 PA-01 PRS-01 /085 W

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R 060958Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3230

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 3418

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEAN SN

SUBJ: PROPOSED ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN ASEAN AND US

REF: A. SINGAPORE 3152; B. BANGKOK 14810; C. JAKARTA 9341

D. MANILA 10439; E. STATE 283832 OF 31 DEC 1974

1. DEPUTY SECRETARY IN CHARGE OF THE REGIONAL AND ECONOMIC DIVISION OF MFA, LEE CHIONG GIAM, FOLLOWED UP INFORMAL MFA APPROACH REPORTED REF A BY CALLING IN DCM AUGUST 6 TO RAISE SUBJECT FORMALLY. LEE SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF US/ASEAN ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AT THE LAST ASEAN SECRETARIES GENERAL MEETING HELD IN MANILA IN JULY WHERE THERE WAS A GENERAL CONSENSUS THAT A DIALOGUE ON ECONOMIC MATTERS WITH THE USG SHOULD BE EXPLORED. SINGAPORE, MALAYSIAN AND THAI GOVERNMENTS HAD BEEN SPECIFICALLY CHARGED BY THE SECRETARIES GENERAL TO RAISE QUESTION DIRECTLY WITH US EMBASSIES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CAPITALS. LEE SAID THAT THE NEXT SECRETARIES GENERAL MEETING WOULD PROBABLY BE HELD IN MANILA IN SEPTEMBER, AND THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF USG COULD GIVE SOME INDICATION PRIOR TO THAT MEETING WHETHER
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IT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SCHEDULING ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS.

ASEAN COULD THEN CONSIDER AN APPROPRIATE AGENDA.

2. DCM QUERIED WHETHER THIS APPROACH HAD FULL CONCURRENCE OF ALL THE ASEAN MEMBERS AND ASKED SPECIFICALLY ABOUT INDONESIA'S ATTITUDE. LEE REPLIED THAT ASEAN DECISIONS WERE TAKEN BY CONSENSUS, AND THAT IF THE INDONESIANS HAD OBJECTED, THE GOS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN IN A POSITION TO RAISE THE MATTER WITH US. DCM RECALLED THAT IN ITS INITIAL APPROACH LAST JANUARY US HAD INDICATED THAT IF ASEAN WERE INTERESTED IN A CONSULTATIVE MEETING THE US WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO AN ASEAN INVITATION. LEE NOTED THIS POINT, AND URGED THAT IF THE US IS STILL INTERESTED IN HAVING SUCH CONSULTATIONS, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO REITERATE THIS IN MANILA TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ASEAN STANDING COMMITTEE. HE ALSO SAID GOS WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING US VIEWS DIRECTLY.

3. COMMENT. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IT IS NOW EVIDENT FROM THIS SECOND APPROACH AS WELL AS FROM INFORMATION REPORTED REF B THAT ASEAN IS NOW PREPARED TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY ENGAGING IN ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS WITH USG. REQUEST DEPARTMENT CONFIRM WHETHER US IS STILL PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE IN RESPONSE TO ASEAN INVITATION. IF SO, SUGGEST EMBASSY MANILA BE INSTRUCTED TO INDICATE TO CHAIRMAN OF STANDING COMMITTEE THAT US IS STILL WILLING TO ENGAGE IN SUCH CONSULTATIONS. HOLDRIDGE

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